MINERAL KING PRESERVATION SOCIETY
2936 S. West Street, Visalia, California 93277

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Artwork: Jana M. Botkin
Photography: E. F. Peterson & Marty Peterson

Dear Cabin Owner and Friend:

Mineral King is one of the most beautiful places in California. The purpose of the Mineral King Preservation Society is to keep it that way!

Through the efforts of counsel, the Society has applied for Nonprofit Corporate status with both the federal government and the state of California. Through the efforts of Jean Koch, the Society has retained Mr. John Elliott, a historian and cultural resource specialist, with extensive experience in architectural history and archaeology. Mr. Elliott visited the Mineral King Valley on September 27 and has made preliminary recommendations to the Board concerning immediate need for additional historical information about each cabin.

Mr. Elliott proposes to write a definitive history of the Mineral King Valley, its structures, and its inhabitants. Did you know, for example, that when the Mineral King Road was first opened on August 20, 1879, there were already 150 mining outfits waiting? Much of the history of the Valley is oral history which -- if it is not preserved by us -- will be lost for all time. Although there are some who would prefer Mineral King to return to its "natural" state, many residents of the West believe our unique history is worth saving.

Enclosed is an Information Sheet for your cabin as well as the cabin history you have already compiled. Please complete the Information Sheet, providing the additional historical data requested by Mr. Elliott. Return it with your Founding Claimstake (membership) soon. A self addressed envelope is provided for your use.

The printer's *deadline* for your cabin history is March 1, 1987. Please return your completed Information Sheet soon!

I will be sending you progress reports on this exciting new development in the preservation of Mineral King and its unique cultural heritage.

Very truly yours,

Ora Kay Peterson
Secretary

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Check-list on Cabin History:

Cabin Number _____
and Area _____

1. Name_____ Address_____
Telephone No._____

2. DESCRIPTION of cabin, architectural materials, remodeling jobs, one black/white photograph of your facade and one historical photograph of your cabin if available (identify your photo on backside).

3. Brief history of your cabin:

   a. When it was built (if not known, are there any living relatives of former owners you can contact?).

   b. Famous visitors (or personalities who had a hand in Mineral King, such as Walt Disney, Congressmen) anecdotes, old clippings, photos, etc., artifacts from mines, etc. which you could possibly donate in the future for an Interpretive Center (we need to compile an inventory).

   c. Is there a historical name for the cabin other than your name? Former site of another cabin?

   d. Atwell Mill lumber? Be specific about the material used, past and present in construction of your cabin.

   e. Does anyone know the history of the "honeymoon" cabin near the Mineral King Store site on the Disney property?

   f. Tape record oral history from oldest members of your Mineral King cabin family -- very important!

   g. Old photographs of the mining days, 1870's, 80's, 90's; old butcher shop and cabins in area, photos in 1900's; photos needed in Tom Mixter-Martin Dula Area (those cabins unknown when built); photos needed of W. Mineral King, E. Mineral King, Faculty Flat, Cabin Cove, Mineral King Store (before and after avalanche), tent cabins, etc. We also need a history of all the pack stations, locations with photos, and old maps.

   Earl Meyer has offered to make copies of photographs for us for a nominal fee. You can either send them to him or to us. All photographs should be sent registered mail -- $1.50. His address is: Earl D. Meyer
   Isbell Printing Co.
   2535 Jack Rabbit
   Tucson, Arizona 85745
   Telephone: (602) 792-2791

4. We have a deadline of March 1, 1987 for the history of the Mineral King cabins to be completed and "in". If you can you finish yours before the holidays that would be great too!

5. Are there others you know who would be interested in our project who could supply us with information?

Thank you.

The Mineral King Preservation Society

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Mineral King Preservation Society
c/o Ora Kay Peterson
2936 S. West Street
Visalia, CA 93277

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August 1981

Cabin #10 - HISTORY OF KOCH CABIN, MINERAL KING

Cabin #10 at Faculty Flat was built about 1926 by Mr. Hanna, who taught Chemistry in the Los Angeles school system. He was a bachelor so the cabin was very tiny. He did enjoy the view of the river, so, long before the days of picture windows, he installed a large picture window in the south wall of the cabin. One can still enjoy a view of the river from that very window. The glass has never even had to be replaced. Mr Hanna also enjoyed seeing the stars at night, so he hinged a section of the roof so that he could prop it up at night and get a good view of the southern sky. The hinged section has long since been shingled over and if one wants a view of the stars at night, he must sleep out on the porch. Mr. Hanna planted a row of fir trees that are still growing on the west boundary of the lot. He sold his cabin to Mr. and Mrs. Henry Cushman about 1929.

Hank Cushman was a shop teacher in southern California and he made many improvements in the cabin over the years. First of all, he added a real kitchen with a butane stove and hot water heater. He installed butane lights downstairs and a stall shower in the bath room. The crowning glory was a real flush toilet. Hank and Edna spent the entire summer at Mineral King each year along with their little dog. One summer they took a pack trip from Mineral King to Mount Whitney. Those were the days before light weight packing equipment was available. Hank did carpentry work on many of the other cabins and Edna was a great cook. She even baked all her own bread. But Hank and Edna never had guests at the cabin because they said it was too small for more than two people. So everyone was surprised when, in 1958, the Cushmans sold the cabin to the Koch family, which took up summer residence along with their five children.

Jean Koch had spent her summer vacations camping at Mineral King since she was a child, but it was getting almost impossible to camp with five children and each year the Kochs made inquiries about cabins for sale. So when the Bungays introduced them to Hank and Edna, who planned on selling out soon, they had jumped at the chance. The Kochs soon discovered why the Cushman's felt the cabin was too small for more than two people. Hank had the attic fairly stuffed with building materials--buckets of nails, buckets of bent nails, pipes and pipe fittings, rolls of linoleum, rolls of tar paper, etc. Dick and Jean spent their first summer sorting out the things in the attic and set about turning it into wall-to-wall beds. One would think five children would be enough company for each other, but there were always extras along. The gasoline washing machine in the basement was busy those early years. In fact, a neighbor said she thought the centipedes had moved in, there were so many little socks on the line. Jean Koch never mastered the art of cooking on Edna Cushman's butane stove. In fact, there was a minor explosion every time Jean lit the oven and Dick's eye brows were burnt off most of that first summer. The stove had a multitude of handles for turning on various gas jets, some of them only about 3 feet from the floor--just the right height for curious little Kochs to investigate. After several scares, Dick and Jean ordered a wood burning cook stove from Sears Roebuck and with the help of Everett Wood, installed it. The second year the Kochs were there, they shocked Mineral Kingites by inviting their friends, the Asays and their five children to visit them. That made a total of 14 people in the cabin that was too small for more than two people. The Asays were bedded down in the attic, which was none too comfortable, especially for Lyal, since every time he stood up straight, he banged his head on the ceiling. After that the Asays visited the Kochs each summer until the Asays bought their own cabin next door.

As the children grew older, the two families began hiking and later back packing together. Their first big trip was to Mount Whitney and back, a distance of 110 miles. The following year, they drove 150 miles north of Mineral King and hiked south 150 miles on the John Muir Trail. Both the Asays and the Kochs, along with many other people who were interested in

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preventing Mineral King from being developed, worked very hard on the Mineral King Task Force. They started a fund that was used to produce a film on Mineral King that was made by Bruton Peterson and Jim Rascoe, who were graduate students in the Cinema Department at the University of Southern California.

Beginning in 1971, the Kochs took up cross-country skiing and, along with the Asays, began coming into the cabin on winter week ends. Although it is very primitive at Mineral King in the winter with no running water in the cabins, necessitating trips to the out house and trips through snow drifts to the river for water, they found the valley gorgeous and restful in its glistening winter coat.

The Koch children grew up but they still enjoy coming to the cabin. Now three of the grand children go on the annual Koch-Asay back pack hike.

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